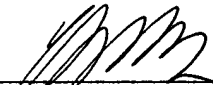


**Remarks/Arguments:**

With this amendment, the applicants amend claims 1, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 14, and 19 for typographical errors and clarity.

Claims 17, 18, and 21-28 are cancelled. The remaining claims 1, 4, 6, 7-9, and 11-20 are the claims indicated by the Examiner to contain allowable subject matter. The applicants therefore submit that claims 1, 4, 6, 7-9, and 11-20 are in a condition for allowance and request early notification to that effect.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Dated: October 1, 2004

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The Commissioner for Patents is hereby authorized to charge payment to Deposit Account No. **18-0350** of any fees associated with this communication.

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail, with sufficient postage, in an envelope addressed to: Mail Stop Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on:

October 1, 2004

Date

  
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Christopher R. Lewis